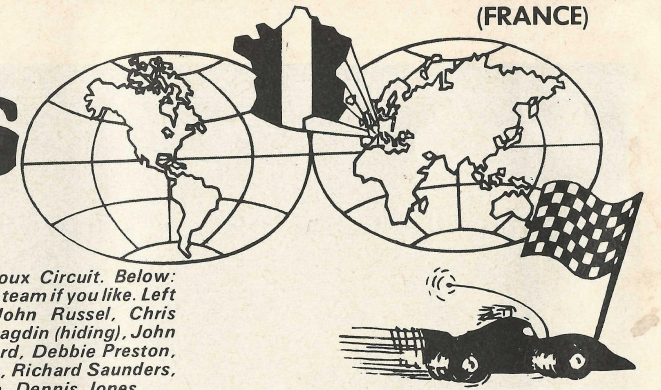


# 1/8 SCALE I.C. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

REPORT BY

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INTERNATIONAL 1/8 SCALE racing has often been described as 'proper' racing by its most avid supporters, as it is reckoned to be the only aspect of R/C car racing that comes closest to epitomising the 1:1 scale Grand Prix scene. The top participating drivers are professionals in the truest sense of the word, rewarded handsomely for their expertise on the track, extensive testing of new designs is carried out by the various manufacturers seeking that all-important edge, whilst the competition between these self-same drivers and manufacturers is every bit as fierce as its full-size counterpart.

Considering this, the 1983 Carnoux World Championships, the fourth to be held, had to be the most prestigious event in R/C model car racing, it attracted competitors from all over the World, Japan, South America, Australia (no Russians mind you), with representatives from the modelling press in attendance to report everything.

However, what should have been an International get-together of R/C car enthusiasts as well as a Contest of Champions turned out to be one of the bitterest fiascos yet to be seen in International racing. Why? Simply because of the reasons set out above, the intense competition plus the commercial aspect. It would seem that the lure of increased kit sales as a result of their car winning was just too great for some manufacturers, resulting in an acrimonious battle of gamesmanship, protests and downright cheating. It was this aspect that overshadowed the event and which subsequently left R/C Model Car racing's most glittering prize looking, at the very least somewhat tarnished. Of course, it is true to say that commercialism was bound to play some part in the proceedings, but nobody can possibly excuse the extent that, what is ostensibly an amateur sport, should be a suborned into a battle for commercial gain.

Having said that — and there's more to come — these Championships were not totally devoid of the high spots hoped for by the spectators attending, that is, the edge-of-the-seat type of racing that we expect from the World's top drivers.

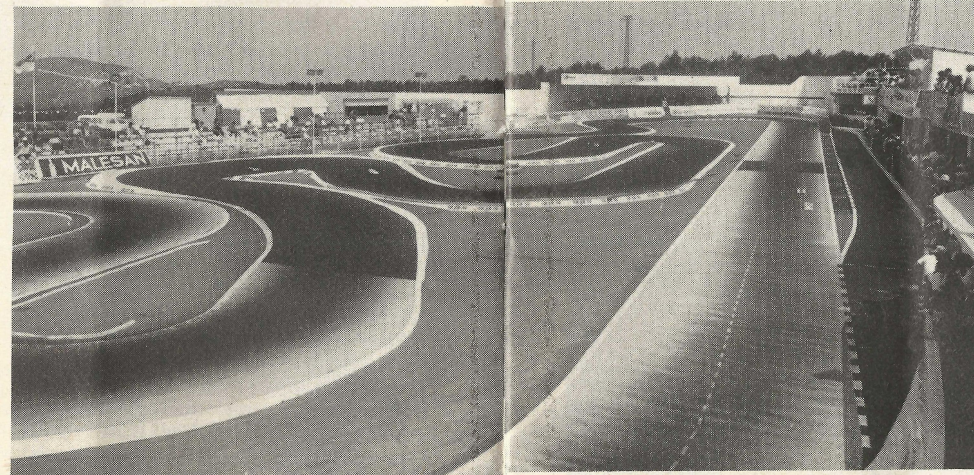
Considering the magnitude of this event it is hardly surprising to find that not many countries are willing, or even yet, allowed to host the World Champs. All credit then to the Carnoux mini-racing club, in particular, Michelin Lesurier in having the courage to undertake this task.

Carnoux itself is situated between Marseille and Toulon about 10-15 Km

inland from the coastal resort of Cassis (see Michelin tour map No. 84). Carnoux is a new town, only twenty years old, has no hotels, no railway station and few buses visit it, it is, quite simply in the middle of nowhere. Nevertheless, the Carnoux mini racing circuit is there, perched almost on top of a mountain and as an R/C car circuit it's really quite impressive.

The owner of the circuit and its surrounding facilities is wealthy building contractor, Mr. Rossi. It was his company that had much to do with creating the town Carnoux just after the Algerian war. His subsequent involvement with an electrical company owned by Jean Matrone, an avid R/C car enthusiast, brought about the building of the circuit. Possibly as an attempt to make the circuit pay for itself, a nightclub was introduced, 'La Chicane', which sits right next to the track. The rest of the facilities are also permanent and include covered pits, grandstand viewing, various bars and the lap-timing/race direction buildings. As mentioned already the circuit is a real gem, beautifully smooth, with banked corners and a long straight. Much work has been done on the track to make it ready for the World Championships, courtesy of Mr. Rossi's building company, the changes are mainly to the infield resulting in a much twistier centre section, even so the circuit is still very fast, 20 second lap times are the average.

Extremely good pit facilities were laid on for the assembled competitors, comprising of compressed air guns (for cleaning purposes) and direct 220V and 12V electric supplies. The 'Parc Ferme' area situated directly underneath the drivers' rostrum, also included this plus ten starter boxes, one for each mechanic; access to the circuit was allowed only from the 'Parc Ferme' area. The main pit area also contained two



large 'industrial' type lathes for tyre truing or any other precision machining jobs.

On the organisational side however various things seemed suspect although these didn't become fully apparent until the end of official practice. The main bone of contention was, as might be expected, the lap-counting system. The computerised system in operation was seen to be totally inflexible as once started was virtually unstoppable for 10½ minutes (heat duration + start). No hold facility was incorporated — meaning, if you weren't there — tough!

Of course, moves by IFMAR officials were made to change the system but surprisingly Rossi and his band of organisers would have none of it, this was their system and that was that. Coupled with this was the distance between the lap-timing building and the start line, some 30 yards,

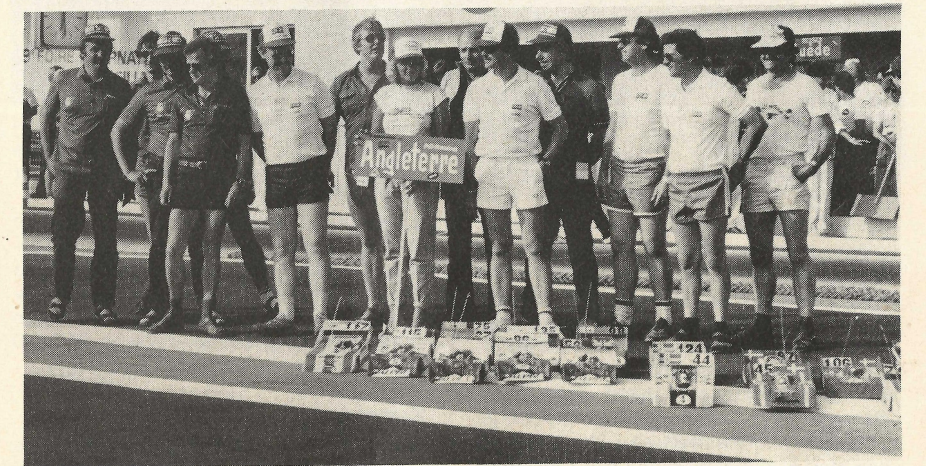
*Below: the symbolic releasing of doves was conducted in perfect contrast to much of what followed, even so, the thought was there.*



the drivers and the start line marshalls having to rely on the countdown broadcasted from the lap-counters to warn them of the impending off. This countdown plus the fact that the majority of any race commentary or announcements was given in French even though the official language of IFMAR is English led to confusion. Furthermore — yes there is more — the lap counters viewing area was situated directly in front of the top bend, around which cars were accelerating in readiness for the long straight, any car going wide on the bend ended up underneath the line of the window with obvious results. Considering these aspects it was hardly surprising to find some of the major teams used their own lap computers to check the lap-by-lap times of their drivers against the official result from race-control. On the plus side race information, lap scores and position tables were relayed to the pits via closed circuit TV screens.

Finally, admittance to the pits was strictly

*Left: the impressive Carnoux Circuit. Below: L'equipe Anglais, or British team if you like. Left to right: Steve White, John Russel, Chris White, Gary Culver, Paul Pagdin (hiding), John Chamberlain, Andy Stafford, Debbie Preston, Dave Preston, Phil Greeno, Richard Saunders, Steve Fagg, Bob Errington, Dennis Jones.*



limited, by the organisers, to those displaying an identification tag which helped to keep the cramped pit area free.

## Technicalities

Although suspension cars have been with us for over two years these World Champs were the first opportunity for the individual manufacturers to prove their equipment against the rest of the world. Unfortunately for the enthusiasts back home many of the works teams were running modified versions of the kits available commercially, in some cases substantially so.

## P.B.

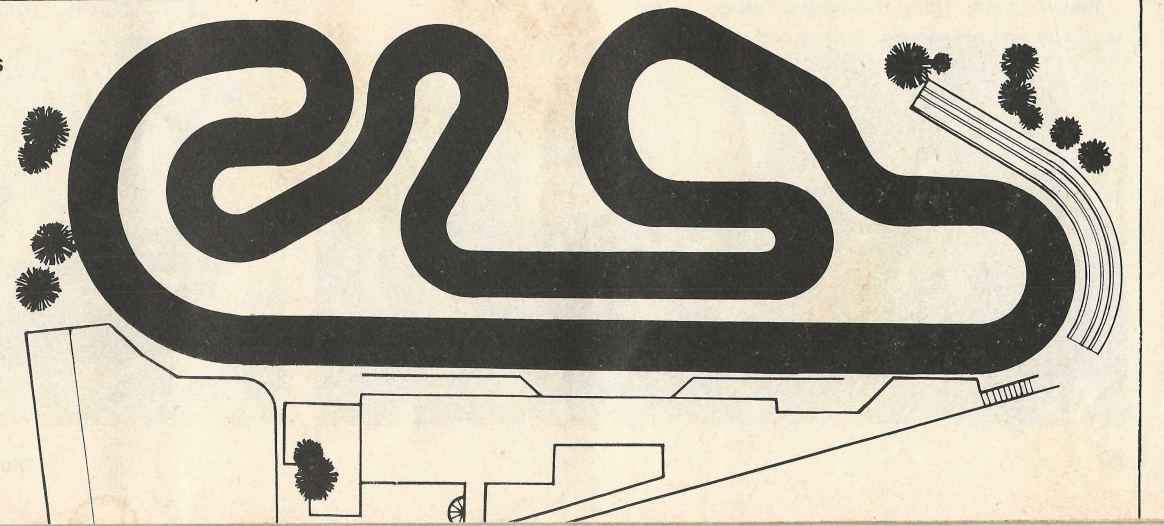
Despite the recent introduction of the 'Alpha GP' the P.B. team drivers Gary

Culver, Steve White, Chris White and Paul Pagdin were all running examples of Keith Plested's prototype 'Beta' car.

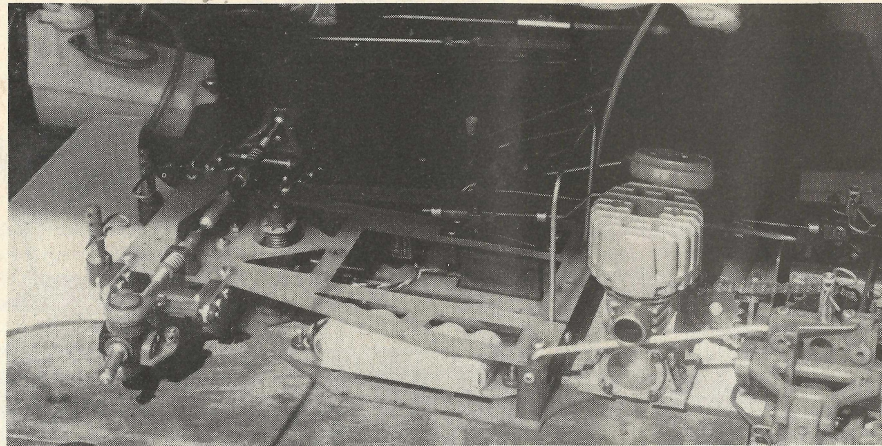
This car does use many Alpha parts, but considerable changes have been made to the front suspension to improve the geometry. Changes have been made in an attempt to obtain more steering power and include changed camber angle and a revised system of fixing and connecting the mono-shock damper. A much wider chassis is used with weight saving effected by fretting out sections, also a feature of the radio plate.

The rear chassis is stiffened by fitting tie rods between the rear radio plate mount and the rear suspension mounting blocks. These changes result in a lighter and stiffer car with much improved steering bite.

1/8 Scale  
World Champs  
Circuit  
Carnoux







Above: Gary Culver's prototype 'Beta' car was viewed with much interest by the International PB Owners Club. Right: D&D Graphite Delta showing very neat layout. Note lightened front wishbones.

### Associated

As far as the 'RC 500' suspension car was concerned it was impossible to find two cars that looked remotely similar. Whether this is a reflection of the American approach to car preparation or just an indictment of the kit itself is anybody's guess. Suffice it to say, none of those assembled in Carnoux looked anything like a kit car. Of the few similarities between them the most common was the use of the new rear shock mountings, upright as against diagonally opposed. Also many of the US drivers were using moulded carbon-fibre monocoque, chassis produced by Kim Davis of *D & D Graphite*. The chassis comprises of two moulded channels bolted together to form a super-rigid box, slots for the fuel tank, radio gear and other bits having been fretted out. One other interesting point was the use of 1/12th scale type servo savers on the steering servo, albeit a larger version made by *Kimbrough USA*. With the *D & D* chassis the steering servo is mounted pointing downwards through the top deck.

Two gear automatic transmission was also much in evidence on the *Associated* cars, although few of the other teams were using this, there being no marked speed advantage with or without it.

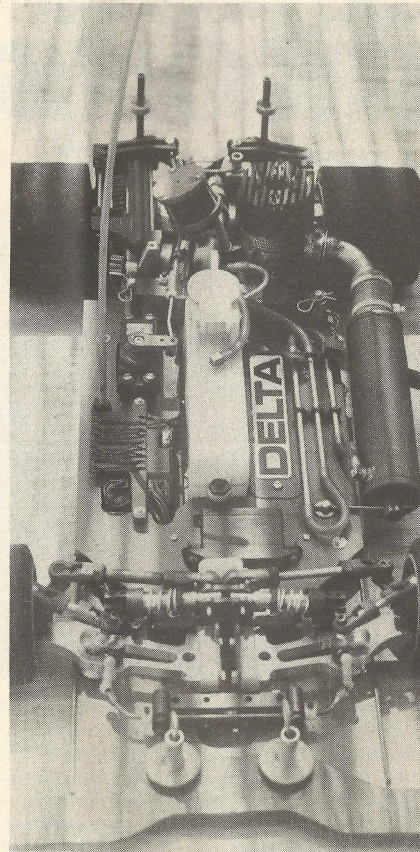
Finally, aside from the above, other

changes/modifications included belt-drive, geared differentials, adjustable camber front-ends and revised roll-bar mountings fore and aft.

The most popular power source for the Americans was the *K & B* engine, re-worked, blueprinted and re-built by Rich Lee with *Picco* carburettor and *McCoy* tuned pipe. Favourite bodysells were the 'Elfin can-am' although 'Porsche 917/30 KL's were also being used.

### Kyosho

As anticipated several of the Japanese contingent arrived with production versions of the *Kyosho* 'Fantom' four-wheel drive machine of which prototypes were seen at the previous World Champs. Although four-wheel drive the car features no sophisticated suspension system an aspect which was quite noticeable on the track as the car could be seen juddering or hopping as the flat chassis flexed under power. The car was still fast and cornered very well, but the handling was certainly a far cry from the full independent opposition — if it had rained mind you! Technically speaking the 'Fantom' features a chain drive system running the length of the car, the rear axle has a bevel gear differential built into the wheel hub, with a sprocket on the opposite side to take the chain. The front wheels are fitted with free-wheeling roller clutches to provide front differential action.

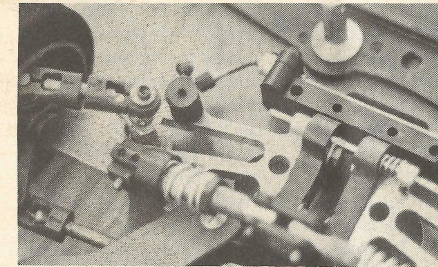
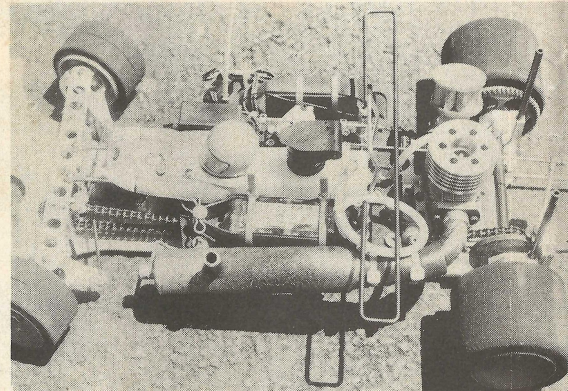
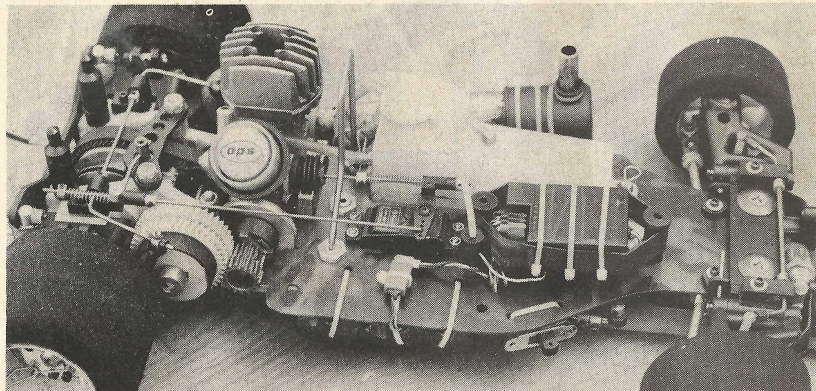


### Delta

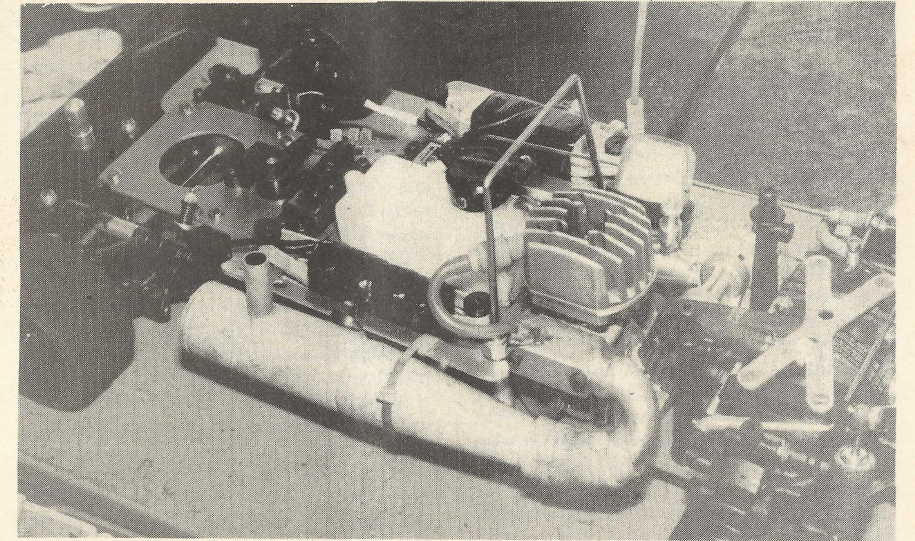
The 'Eagle's' unique design remained virtually unchanged for this Championship only slight differences on Arturo Carbonell's (previous World Champion) car were noticed, these being to the front end. A small ride height adjuster was incorporated on the nylon wishbone pivot blocks whilst a flex limiting link was fitted from the bump-stop to the top of the steering arm.

Once again several of the American *Delta* drivers were using *D & D Graphite* chassis.

Below left: Debbie Preston's *Associated* two gear transmission, belt drive adjustable castor front end and much more besides. Below: Katsunori Kondo's *Kyosho Fantom 4WD* very quickly down the straight.



Above: close up of modified Delta 'Eagle' front suspension lightening holes in swinging arms plus an adjustable stay between the top of the king pins and the wishbone. Down stops are now re-sited to fit across the pivot blocks bolted to the inner end of the swinging arms. Right: SG team car is almost 100 per cent kit standard. OPS motor, manifold and tuned pipe used — a potent combination.



### Serpent

The *Serpent* team also had enough faith in their product to run standard kit versions of the 'Quattro'. The new constant volume shock absorbers have virtually transformed the original 'Quattro' resulting in a very stable appearance around the Carnoux circuit. The *Serpent* team were also well prepared for fuel stops, having brought with them a fuel 'gun' which injects the necessary into the tank in about a second flat!

### SG

No championships would be complete without the Italians, their fanatical approach to racing — or rather winning — is both interesting and nerve-wracking to see at this level. It seems that this aspect coupled with their total conviction that they are the best sets the Italians almost at loggerheads with the rest of the car racing world. Whatever the opinion of the non-latins present at international meetings it has to be said that the Italian/SG team has some of the best drivers, driving very competitive machinery to be found anywhere.

Aside from the SG 'Columbia' also appeared in very much kit trim with only very subtle differences. A thicker chassis (3mm) was deemed to be 'de rigueur' for the Carnoux circuit after extensive testing by the team. Thicker springs for the front and rear suspension were incorporated, the theory being to stiffen up the whole car for the high grip surface. The rear shock-absorber placement was also changed back to independently mounted shocks for each wheel.

Team discipline was extremely high in the SG camp — if Gheri used it — then so did everyone else! The OPS power plant with tuned pipe was universal.

### Qualifying

After the scuttlebut of official practice things really began to hot up as the qualify-

ing rounds approached. Each driver had six six attempts over two days to score a qualify-time, the driver's being separated into two groups, A and B, each group having heats set in the morning and afternoon. At the end of the two days the fastest four drivers would go straight through to the final leaving the rest to fight it out on finals day.

### Opening Ceremony

The French organisers certainly went in for this in a big way with military band, baton-twirling majorettes and a presentation to the public of the teams from each country. To cap it all the World Championship trophy was flown in by helicopter, of all things. Looking back, the most incongruous thing to happen was the releasing of a flock of doves — doves of peace, presumably.

The ceremony finally drew to a close with a five minute 're-run' of the last World Championship final. A little bit of light relief I was led to believe, but no! All ten drivers were as serious as hell and raced no holds barred, Ermes Tadiello crossed the finishing line as winner and nobody protested — amazing. Now for the real thing.

### Day 1

Right from the start of the first race at 8.30 a.m. on the Thursday, it was plain to see that 28, 29 or even 30 laps in the ten minutes heat time was the only way to qualify well for finals day. Each driver, following completion of his heat, was presented with a lap by lap score sheet from the manual lap-counters, the official computer read-out was posted much later. This meant that by the time that heat 5 results were made public Round 2 was already under way. For the whole of group A heat 5 was the one to watch containing as it did our own Paul Pagdin, veteran USA racer Bill Jianas (*Associated*) David Lecat of France (*PB*) Kondo Katsunori of Japan

(*Kyosho*), Italian, Roberto Bartolomasi (*SG*) and the American 'hot-shot' Ralphie Burch (*Associated*). Whilst drivers of international repute were scoring 27s, 28s, Ralphie (nicknamed the 'Robot' by his team-mates) blasted round to score 29 laps, his fluid driving style leaving the knowledgeable spectators breathless. Even after his superb run Ralphie complained of engine overheating, a problem that was to plague the *Associated* drivers all weekend, with dire results — they had hoped to dominate, instead they began to find it hard to compete.

The spur of a 29 lapper saw a gaggle of drivers raise their times in the next round including John Chamberlain, David Lecat, Bill Jioanas, Franco Sabbatini, Venezuelan unknown, Maurizio Bosnardo and new Italian super-ace — wait for it! — Massimiliano Constantini — whew! Ralphie Burch, nonetheless, told them all where to get off by scoring another 29 laps, only 3 seconds slower than his first round score. At this point the art of gamesmanship began to arise as a protest was made concerning the legality of Ralphie's *K&B* engine, the Italians were top of most people's list for this although the French team were a close second. The *K&B* was legal but after its strip down virtually useless as the precision fit of the parts was gone. Reacting in kind, the *Associated* camp successfully forced a strip down of top SG driver Guilo Gheri's *OPS*, again without success.

After round three the top three pace-setting qualifiers were R. Burch (29 10.2) Franco Sabbatini (28 3.4) and M. Constantini (28 4.2). Still, very early stages as a whole host of top drivers were contained in group B's afternoon session.

As to be expected in the South of France the temperature was rising into the high 90s as the day wore on. Apart from affecting the human condition the heat also change the nature of the tract resulting in patchy grip — too much grip or none at all!



Allied to this was the fact that even after three days of racing very little in the way of oil and rubber had been laid onto the track as most drivers had positioned the cars exhaust outlets pointing upward. Nevertheless, extremely good racing was to be seen particularly from head-to-head confrontations between Steve White (PB) and Ermes Tadiello (SG), Gary Culver (PB) and Guilo Gheresi (SG). For this particular session it was the Italian pair who took the honours albeit with some difficulty — the races were that close. Rody Roem, another of the sports Young Lions from Holland, (driving a *Serpent* 'Quattro' naturally enough), also achieved fast 28s along with Ronnie Ton, Curtis, Husting and Rich Lee from the States. The dynamic duo of Phil Greeno and Bob Errington, both driving SGs also featured well. Phil, incidentally, despite being a last minute qualifier, for this event looked right on form and would have scored a 29 had not it been for bad marshalling. Bob on the other hand was quite unhappy with his car's performance on the track, particularly as nothing wrong could be found with the car's set-up. Considering this his times were quite remarkable.

Sadly, *Delta* drivers Art Carbonell — defending world champion — and Naoki Ishihara former finalist, could not put their cars into any sort of contention, although as *Delta* boss Bill Campbell said, 'there's always tomorrow.' At the end of the day's racing 'Robot' Ralphie's 29 lap time was still fastest although Giulio Gheresi had narrowed the gap to 12 seconds with team mate Ermes Tadiello third and Ralphie's team mate Re-Pete Fusco fourth.

### Day 1 Results

1. R. Burch	20 10.2	Associated	USA
2. G. Gheresi	29 22.2	SG	Italy
3. E. Tadiello	28 0.7	SG	Italy
4. Re-Pete Fusco	18 2.0	Associated	USA
5. F. Sabbattini	28 3.4	SG	Italy
6. M. Constantini	28 4.2	SG	Italy
7. R. Lee	28 5.3	Associated	USA
8. P. Greeno	28 5.5	SG	Italy
9. V. Orazi	28 6.0	SG	Italy
10. Bartolomasi	28 6.0	SG	Italy
11. C. Husting	18 6.4	Associated	USA
12. R. Roem	28 7.8	Serpent	NL

### British Drivers

17. G. Culver
22. J. Chamberlain
23. S. White
27. R. Errington
34. C. White
85. D. Preston

So, as can be seen from the above results, the time separating the drivers from fifth downwards are split-second, a slow fuel stop, clipped corner, slow back marker — all these things can rob seconds from a qualifying time. Alas, the poor Brits apart from Phil could not function under the conditions, till tomorrow was potentially another day. Perhaps a drink at 'La Chicane' would have sorted things out but with half a lager costing £3.50 I didn't think so!

### Day 2

At least on the Friday there was some sort of a breeze to cool the fevered brows of the assembled drivers, mechanics, team managers and reporters! Having watched the faster times of the previous day being set in the relative cool of the morning session the drivers of group B were even more acutely aware of the need for three super quick, clean heats.

Gary Culver at last came good and displayed the form that made him one of the favourites for the title. The, crowd loving every minute of his first heat of the day, the PB 'Alpha', now fitted with a different pipe, frantically fended off a ten minute challenge from Gheresi even though the commentator gave the verdict the other way.

Also, in the first round Rody Roem scored his first 29 lap score along with Phil Greeno, Phil, displaying some of that 'old Greeno magic' and for once staying out of trouble. The secret of his success was quite undoubtedly in his explosive starts off the line. Pit man, Steve Fagg, first warmed up the diff by holding the rear wheels on the line then two quick bursts of the throttle to get fuel through and unload the motor then shutdown and finally go! go! go!

Still Ralphie Burch's first day/round time remained the best although the gap was definitely narrowing and it was still open to anyone. Once again, it was Gary Culver who rose to the challenge. Without Gheresi to chase him (he retired early on) he drove magnificently in his second heat until disaster struck halfway round on his 28th lap, the *Picco* engine ran out of fuel putting paid to a certain 30 lapper and FTD.

Both Ermes Tadiello and Steve White were penalised in the second round for a jump start, once again gamesmanship was to blame as the Italian already had a fast time from his first heat. So psyched up was Steve, that when Tadiello jumped, so did he.

As a technical aside the monitoring for jump-starts was done by an 'Instamatic' camera mounted on the line at track level. Subsequent photographs proved the errors of anyone's way without argument. Neat.

Back on the home front and bad news for Debbie Preston driving the Dave Preston/Phil Booth *Associated*. Something was wrong no doubt about that — but what? Nothing that Dad could do worked enough for Debbie to score any more than 27 laps. Arturo Carbonell on the other hand finally proved his status as world champion scoring 29 laps in 10 17.0. The sigh of relief from the Team *Delta* pits was as loud as it was long. No further fast times were recorded from the morning session although many had consolidated their positions and gained valuable track time. The real nail-biting stuff for them was the afternoon wait to see whether their times would stand.

They need not have worried as the afternoon session proved even more disastrous

than the previous days. The poor American/*Associated* drivers could only react in exasperation as their engines overheated, cut and refused to restart time after time. Sadly no magic was forthcoming from great drivers such as Bill Jianias, Rick Davis, Roger Curtis and Re-Pete Fusco. Even Ralph Burch couldn't match his previous times, his inability to come to grips with the track (*sic*) boded ill for the final.

The final round of qualifying was held up for ten minutes whilst the Referees called a meeting of the team managers to discuss racing etiquette. Either clean it up or get disqualified was the general message although it was delivered a little late in the day (metaphorically speaking). British driver Chris White however, driving the PB finally managed to secure a reasonably fast 28 laps for the next day.

So that was it. Ralph's time stood strong against the opposition, putting him in pole position for the hour long final.

### Day 2 Results

#### Straight Through Qualifiers

1. R. Burch	29 10.2	Associated
2. G. Culver	29 15.1	PB
3. G. Gheresi	29 14.4	SG
4. R. Roem	29 16.4	Serpent

#### Semi-Final A

5. A. Carbonell	29 17.0	Delta
6. P. Greeno	29 17.4	SG
7. C. Husting	29 17.5	Associated

#### Semi-Final B

8. E. Tadiello	28 00.6	SG
9. Re-Pete Fusco	28 02.0	Associated
10. R. Pezzini	28 03.2	SG

#### British Drivers

18. S. White	28 08.4
24. R. Errington	28 11.7
27. C. White	28 13.5
31. J. Chamberlain	28 14.7
40. P. Pagdin	28 18.6
47. D. Preston	27 01.4

Again, the times separating the top ten are so close that it must be soul destroying for drivers inched out of the semis by tenths of seconds. Franco Sabbattini for instance missed it by 0.4 of a second! Ah, well, you can't have your cake and eat can you.

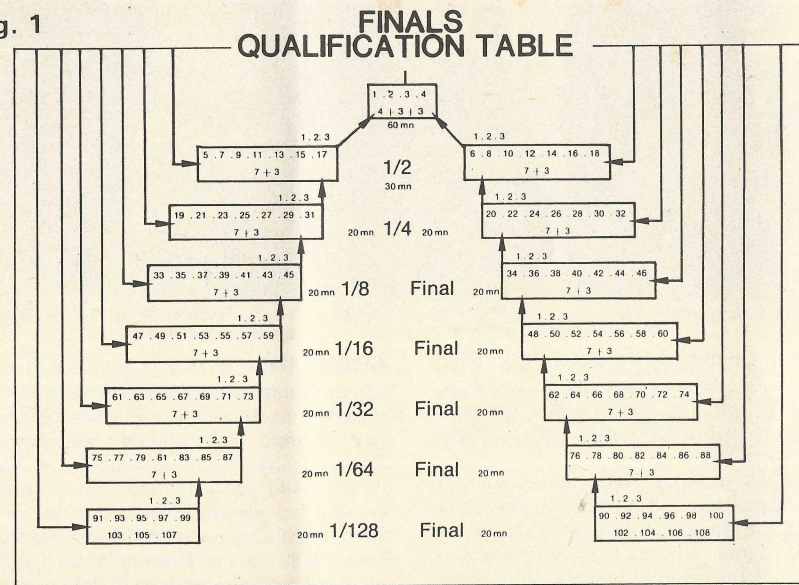
### Finals Day

For these championships the French had adopted the 'Christmas Tree' method of qualification. 108 drivers out of 120 were sorted into finals from 1/12th finals right up to the semis (see fig. 1), the fastest three drivers from each final going through to the next and so on. Theoretically it was possible to work right through from the bottom to the top, using plenty of fuel, tyres, radio, power and sheer endurance along the way. Nobody did it, mind you, but it was possible.

The level of interest, naturally, rose as the day's proceedings reached their logical conclusion particularly as the finals were now 20 minutes long except for the semis which were 30 minutes.

The first British prospect to appear was

Fig. 1



Debbie Preston in the 1/16 final, sadly her last chance attempt never materialised as the *OPS* engine blew on the warm-up lap. Paul Pagdin, next on the list, also found himself let down by his machinery when a front suspension pin pulled out just as he was extending his lead over the rest of the field. His subsequent fourth place, despite a spirited battle, was simply not enough.

The first of the quarter finals really started to heat up the interest of spectators and mechanics alike, featuring Chris White and John Chamberlain alongside Peter Bervoets from the Dutch *Serpent* team and Dana Smeltzer of the States. Despite brother Steve's help and advice, Chris could not get his engine to function at all. John, nevertheless, just managed to qualify third for the semi. However, no sooner had the race finished than the Americans were protesting, although this time with some justification as the race had been started 10 minutes earlier than scheduled. After a team managers' meeting a re-run was agreed which gave several people a second chance including Chris. John Chamberlain unfortunately would have to re-qualify along with Peter Bervoets (winner) and Heinz Wipflih of Germany.

The second quarter final featured a whole lot of aces, Naoki Ishihara of Japan, Bill Jianias, Bob Errington, Ronnie Ton and the spectators' favourite, David Lecat of France driving a PB 'Alpha GP'. Once again misfortune shone on the British as the steering servo on Bob Errington's SG failed on the first lap. David Lecat on the other hand inspired by the chanting of his home crowd scored an impressive win over Ishihara with Hoschen third.

The quarter final re-run proved to be desperately disappointing for John Chamberlain as he could only manage fourth place behind Dana Smeltzer. Peter Bervoets and Michael Mielde of Germany, knowing that team mate Phil Greeno could

well qualify for the final could only have made matters worse.

From the semi-finals, only the first two drivers from each went through to the final plus the next two fastest from both semis.

### Semi-Final 1

Semi-final one was in some ways very prophetic as it featured a magnificent tussle for the lead between Ermes Tadiello and David Lecat, the latter having the advantage of vocal support from the crowd. Every time his car overtook somebody else's, the chanting would begin "Lecat Lecat, Lecat". even so, the SG of Tadiello stayed out in front for once without the presence of Steve White to bother him. Almost from the word 'go', Steve had radio trouble, although his gear had been a 100% all week. Still, the curiously selective interference persisted and his hopes were dashed. Although out of the hunt as far as this race was concerned, both Vitto Orazi and Phil Greeno knew that qualifying times were to be had and raced accordingly, Orazi, who is the SG factory's top test driver was using a headphone set fitted with an intercom linking him to his mechanic in the pits; is this the shape of things to come? At the 30 minute signal, it was Tadiello first, a lap up on David Lecat, with Vitto

*Strict penalties were enforced for not complying with the pit lane and start procedure that is hands-off.*

Orazi and Phil Greeno in third and fourth respectively.

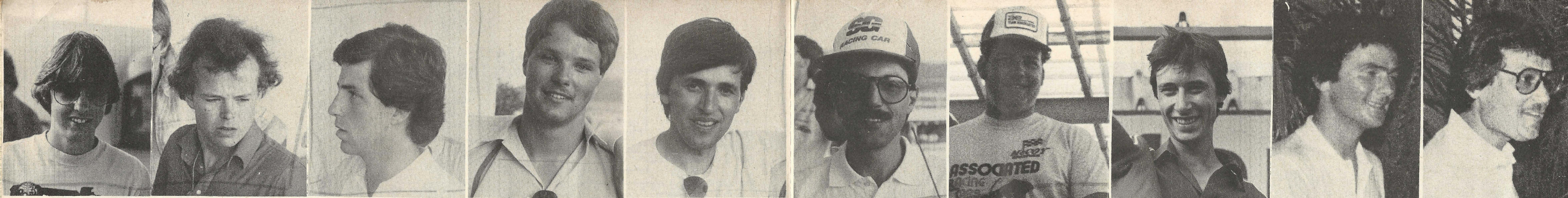
### Semi-Final 2

If nothing else, the second semi proved the validity of re-running the quarter final as both Peter Bervoets and Dana Smeltser got the bit firmly between their teeth and sprinted away from the rest of the field. Interestingly both their times were faster than two qualifiers from the previous semi although the rest of the field were much slower. Hope then for Phil Greeno who spent an agonising 30 minutes waiting to see if he had made it as one of fastest losers. Out on the track the leading pair were swapping the lead almost every lap pulling out a three lap lead at the end on Curtis Husting and Roberto Bartolomasi. Peter Bervoets just managing to cross the line first much to the jubilation of the *Serpent* team. Alas Arturo could not qualify after a bad start and engine cuts put him well down the field.

On the strength of the published result both Vitto Orazi and Phil Greeno had made it through as fastest qualifiers. However, the Americans again protested, claiming lap-timing errors in Curtis Husting's race sheet. Race control agreed with them and







Ralph Burch, USA, Associated.

Gary Culver, England, PB.

Giulio Gherzi, Italy, SG.

Rody Roem, Holland, Serpent.

Peter Bervoets, Holland, Serpent.

Ermes Tadiello, Italy, SG.

Dana Smeltzer, USA, Associated.

David Lecat, France, PB.

Vitto Orazi, Italy, SG.

Phil Greeno, England, SG.

for a while Curtis was in. Unfortunately for them they had failed to realise that even with the extra laps awarded Curtis' time was still slower than Phil's, Phil of course lost no time in making this known, and he was re-instated.

**Final**

The four straight through qualifiers were given the opportunity to practice before the semis and were thus 'warmed-up' for the hour-long final. The viewing areas were packed to capacity and the pits were abuzz with excitement and high feelings. Ten drivers were all that were left and on them rested the hopes of the manufacturers involved. The pressure for the finalists must have been indescribable with so much at stake. The Americans threatened to throw anyone off the rostrum who took out Ralphie Burch's car. The Italians would let no-one near their drivers or their cars. In the PB pits Gary Culver looked as if he would collapse with nerves, whilst Phil Greeno frantically tried to prepare his car.

For the final and in fact for all the finals of that day a 'Le Mans' type start was employed in an attempt to remove the usual start line chaos. So it was that the finalists lined up for their first start, an opportunity for the mass of photographers to get their pictures. The cars were lined up again and the countdown commenced only to be interrupted by shouts of 'interference' from Gary and his mechanic Dennis Jones. Gary's radio, like Steve's, had also performed 100% all week and was only now starting to suffer from interference, either accidental or deliberate. The ensuing frequency check proved nothing and so the cars were again lined up and countdown started.

This time it was all systems go and Ralph Burch's car leapt into the lead closely followed by the rest of the field. Ralph quickly built up almost half a lap lead, his car looking super stable and extremely fast, that was until a rare error on his part put the car into some rope track markings. Evidently the front suspension was damaged and he lost ground steadily. Gherzi took the lead after only six minutes with Roem and Lecat in hot pursuit until the three of them plus Gary Culver had engine cuts within minutes of each other. Rody Roem ran out of fuel no less than three times throughout the race, having opted for seven minute fuel stops, his exasperation

being transmitted to the pits via a torrent of abuse. This, notwithstanding Rody's performance on the track was faultless, making up lost ground after each successive restart.

After 15 minutes Ralph pitted with a wrecked gearbox and did not reappear, thus leaving the lead to Giulio Gherzi. Although he too retired minutes later with a blown engine. At the 20 minute mark, Vitto Orazi just edged past David Lecat and sped off into the distance. However, the groans from the partisan French crowd were replaced with cries of pleasure as Orazi's OPS motor also blew halfway down the straight. Still Lecat could not hold his own at the front as Ermes Tadiello went through followed by Rody Roem, this situation staying constant for almost 15 minutes whilst the field chopped and changed behind them. Gary Culver suffering in particular as the handling was definitely off on his 'Alpha'.

With only ten minutes to go it was still a contest between Tadiello, Lecat and Roem, that was until Rody came up behind backmarker Phil Greeno. The resulting 'misunderstanding' between them broke a steering ball joint on the Serpent car and Rody was sidelined for repairs.

Now the battle was between Lecat and Tadiello even though the TV screens put the Italian a lap ahead. At this point confusion began to set in as the cars had seemed a lot closer on the track. The French crowd were wild with excitement and disregarded the lap difference — their man was closing the gap with every corner. The last lap after the 60 minute signal saw Lecat's car right on the SG's tail and they crossed the line separated by mere inches.

If anyone else was confused as to the result then the Italian team most certainly were not, Tadiello was mobbed on the rostrum by his team-mates whilst the track became packed with spectators and well-wishers, so excited was the Italian's mechanic that he fainted in the pit road.

Meanwhile, as the celebrations continued, the finalists' cars were being carefully scrutinised to check their legality. Fortunately nothing was wrong and Tadiello at that time was still savouring the taste of victory. He was still on the rostrum when, minutes later, he was presented with the winner's laurels, magnum of champagne and the championship of the world.

**Aftermath**

In the short space of time between Ermes Tadiello's celebration on the drivers' rostrum and the official presentation banquet, several events took place. First the computer's result of the final was given out which showed Tadiello and Lecat as being on the same lap at the end of the race. Presumably on the strength that, if there was a discrepancy between the TV screens and the official print-out then there could be other mistakes in the lap-counting, the French Federation protested the result even though it was too late to do so. IFMAR officials, including Ted Longshaw the president, asked to check the results themselves to make sure but were refused point blank by the organisers who made it clear that no interference would be tolerated.

The official presentation that evening proved to be even more dramatic as, just before the finalists' names were read out, Ted Longshaw made the announcement that until there was substantiated proof that the results were correct the 1st and 2nd place trophies should not be presented. An official IFMAR meeting next morning would decide the winner and present the trophies then. Of course uproar from the Italian contingent greeted this news — for once the boot was on the other foot. The banquet finally disintegrated into chaos

*Below: Rody Roem, young Dutch 'Serpent' driver came so close to winning - had the fastest car but low on luck.*



Model Cars Bi-Monthly

although things were far from finished, Ted was literally thrown off the circuit by the organiser, Mr. Rossi, and a lot of background manoeuvring took place by the various interested parties to secure the result.

By the time the morning came around several things became apparent. Somehow Ted and IFMAR Vice President Mike Reedy had managed to obtain a print-out of the lap by lap results. It was clear that mistakes had been made and the result was far from

clear, the main discrepancy being between the times noted for the pit stops and the number of laps scored by each car.

Even so, Mr. Rossi once again stamped his authority on the proceedings by announcing that his result would stand, he owned the circuit and the trophies and he could give them to whom he liked! So Tadiello received the first place trophy against the wishes of the IFMAR officials who had sanctioned the meeting.

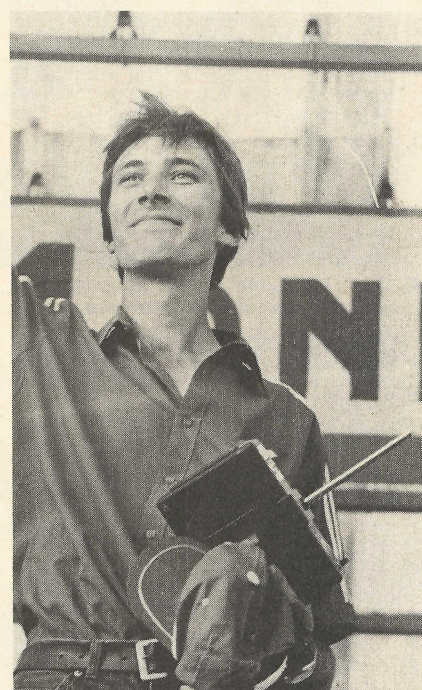
A tragic end to what should have been a

wonderful event. Even now the battle still goes on, IFMAR have announced, after careful checking, that David Lecat is the winner even though the Italian federation is still claiming their man to be champion. The conflict may never be resolved and could have serious repercussions for any sort of international events in the future, including the next world championships to be held in Japan in 1985. It is quite possible that, by then, nobody will care anyway. I just hope they don't take up Buggy Racing!

**1983 1/8 SCALE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS**

		Car	Country	Time	Engine	Radio	
1	E. Tadiello	SG Columbia	Italy	165 14.9	OPS	Sanwa	(Sticks)
2	D. Lecat	PB Alpha GP	France	165 15.5	Picco SX	MPX Combi Car	(Sticks)
3	R. Roem	Serpent Quattro	Holland	160 13.2	OPS RE	Simprop car profi	(Sticks)
4	D. Smeltzer	Asso RC500	USA	156 27.5	K&B	Airtronics	(Wheel)
5	G. Culver	PB Alpha Prot	UK	150 27.9	Picco SX	Futaba	(Sticks)
6	P. Greeno	SG Columbia	UK	147 01.9	OPS RE	Sanwa	(Sticks)
7	P. Bervoets	Serpent Quattro	Holland	137 11.0	OPS RE	Sanwa	(Sticks)
8	V. Orazi	SG Columbia	Italy	111 00.00	OPS RE	Sanwa	(Sticks)
9	G. Gherzi	SG Columbia	Italy	92 00.00	OPS RE	Sanwa	(Sticks)
10	R. Burch	Assoc RC500	USA	55 00.00	K&B	Airtronics	(Wheel)

*Left: Ermes Tadiello, given the trophy on the day, looks like keeping it till the next time. Below: Michelin LeSieur worked hard to organise what should have been the meeting of meetings for 1983. Right: David Lecat - IFMAR's Champion, or is he?*





# WORLD CHAMPS

## II THE SEQUEL

### LEWIS ECKETT SUMMARISES THE SITUATION REGARDING THE 4th 1/8th SCALE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

THE CONTROVERSY continues — will it ever end? At this present time it would seem unlikely.

Letters and statements have been to-ing and fro-ing between the parties concerned ever since Mr. Rossi made his decision and presented the winners trophy.

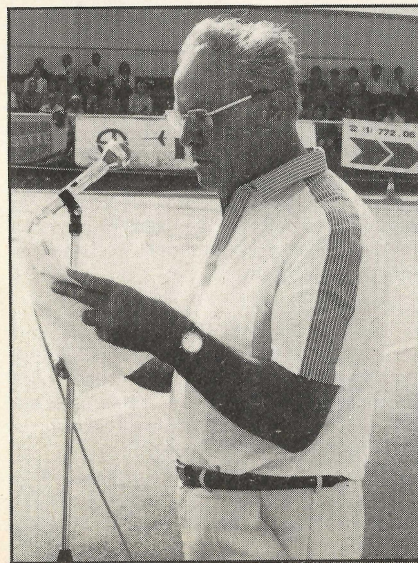
In an attempt to clarify the situation we have decided to print selected quotes from this correspondence so that YOU — the reader can hopefully make your own mind up. Points of view have been taken from all the material we have received here at *Model Cars*, although not very much has been said by the Italians in their defence. One can assume that they either don't want to, or feel that they don't need to. After all they do have the trophy. The race organisers have said nothing.

Trying to remain unbiased has been difficult when confronted with the facts at hand and the majority of feeling about who should be the 1/8th scale World Champion, so here goes.

If you have read the report featured in the October/November issue then you will already know the situation regarding the race, the result and the controversy surrounding it. If you didn't (tsk tsk) then here is a brief synopsis.

At the end of the 60 minutes race Ermes Tadiello of Italy was declared the winner on the drivers rostrum with David Lecat of France second. This was done before the official computer print-out of the results were issued. On receipt of this the French

Mr. Rossi, Race Organiser.



Contingent protested the result and called for the individual lap times to be checked. No facilities were offered to IFMAR (International Federation of Model Automobile Racing) officials to carry out an official examination by the race organisers.

At the official presentation banquet, Ted Longshaw the IFMAR President, called for a postponing of the 1st and 2nd place trophy presentation until the result was clarified.

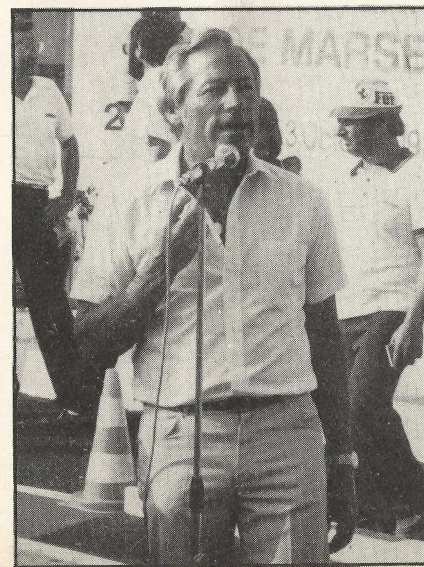
An official IFMAR Meeting the next morning failed to persuade the race organiser, Mr. Rossi, that the trophies should not be presented. Instead the presentation was made according to the original result.

Ever since then, statements have been issued by the various parties concerned. Ted Longshaw EFRA and IFMAR President, in a statement issued on the 23rd July, states IFMAR's position categorically:

*"After extensive independent checks of the original lap charts, timed pit stops and other information produced during the final, it is clear that David Lecat of France completed one more lap than Ermes Tadiello of Italy, and so Lecat is the current 1/8th scale World Champion."*

The Italian Federation along with the SG factory it would seem, have not disputed the fact that the lap counters were wrong. Instead their argument for retaining the title hinges on whether the post race protest by the French team was legally submitted.

Ted Longshaw, IFMAR and EFRA President.



The protest procedure at the World Champs is quite clear as can be seen by the extract from the Rules.

*"Protest against Lap Counting. Not written and without deposit. The Team Manager will show to the Race Director his time lap sheet (the one given by the official lap counter) and will indicate where he thinks an error has been made. Any protest coming after the 5 minutes will not be accepted, unless the results are not yet edited by the computer."*

Now, here's the rub, did the French protest within the 5 minutes? Not according to the Italians who state that . . .

*"the official results were published at 9.37 p.m. and no protest was entered to the Race Director within the five minutes."*

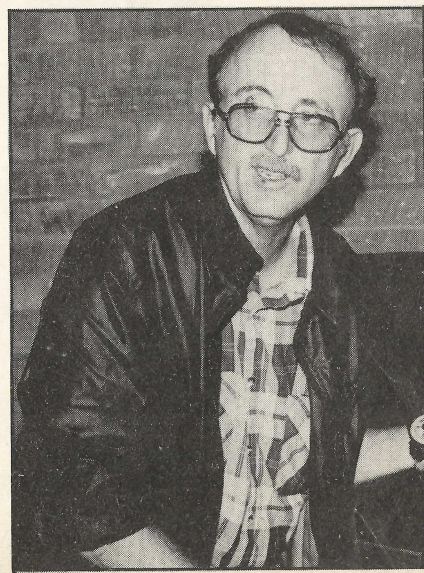
So it would seem that the Italians are happy to be World Champions because of an infringement in procedure rather than admit to being beaten on the track.

In any case the French do not agree as Bernard Poupaert, their Federations President, explains:

*"The request to get the lap sheets was done within the five minutes after the verbal announcement.*

*The lap sheets were not available when requested until 1/2-hour later. If you read the rules it is obvious that the five minutes delay to protest starts when the lap sheet is available. The Team Manager then saw*

Mike Reedy, IFMAR Vice-President.



*the mistake and within the five minutes indicated to the Race Director where he thought an error had been made."*

Even though the French had protested, the Race Directors obviously did not deal with the situation properly as the result was left to stand even though the mistakes in both drivers scorers were plain to see, or would have been in IFMAR officials had been allowed to view them. The only recourse left to the French Team Manager was to complain to an IFMAR official — who better than the President, Ted Longshaw?

Who worse, according to the Italians!

*"The behaviour of Mr. Longshaw, by his own admission, was against all the rules of the World Championship Regulations. The Race Director had confirmed the result and the request of Mr. Longshaw to postpone the presentation for the first two places is to be considered arbitrary."*

Well, if anybody should have the authority to see that fair play is observed it should be the President of the world governing body of the sport.

As Ted himself says:

*"I refused to have anything to do with the actual presentation of the prizes until I was satisfied that I knew who had won."*

And what happened when Ted said as such at the banquet?

*"I had Sabbatini (SG Factory Boss) and the others coming up and screaming and screaming at me, pointing fingers at me and shouting swindle, swindle! PB, PB, around me. A screaming demented mob acting as though they were going to lynch me at 3.30 in the morning!"*

The Italian Contingent were quite naturally upset, their man had been declared the winner and here was somebody telling them there was a doubt. Still, he is the democratically elected President after all.

Since the actual event Ted Longshaw's statement has been supported by a letter of explanation and copies of the lap by lap

David Lecat, IFMAR World Champion.



computer print-outs showing clearly the mistakes and by doing so, underlining the fact that David Lecat won the race. The Italians only answer to this at the time was to instruct their Lawyers to issue a letter threatening legal action against anyone who tries to change the initial result.

The next episode in the sorry tale occurred at the EFRA (European Federation for Radio Auto's) EGM held in Rome during the European Championships. The results of the meeting were relayed to Mike Reedy via a letter from Silvio Manfroi EFRA Vice-President.

*"Following different personal interpretations of the result of the World Championships, EFRA members have decided by voting at the last EGM that the letter sent by Mr. Ted Longshaw in the name of IFMAR naming David Lecat the winner of the '83 W.Ch. Must be withdrawn."*

Unfortunately for Mr. Manfroi his letter cannot be called "EFRA Official" as Bernard Poupaert explains by quoting the Federations Constitution:

1. *"Notice of every General Meeting shall be given at least one month before hand with general particulars of the business to be conducted . . ."*

2. *"The Business at a General Meeting shall be: To consider any matter or proposal which the Executive wishes to bring before the Meeting, particulars of which shall be included in the notice of the Meeting."*

*"To consider any matter or proposal of which a member country has given not less than 6 weeks before the date of the Meeting, notice in writing, particulars of which shall be included in the notice Meeting."*

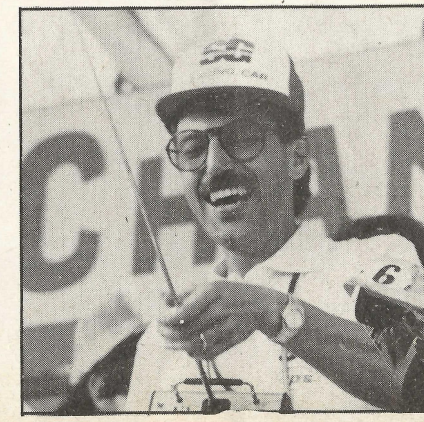
3. *"At any proposal at a General Meeting each member country shall have one vote which shall be exercisable by a person duly authorised in writing by the governing body in such country."*

and goes on to say:

*"None of the 3 above items were observed; more, it was the first time that a vote was requested at the EGM of August and we had only agreed at the last AGM that the G.P. Calendar was to be decided. This was the only thing we had notice of."*

So it would seem that the EFRA vote and

Ermes Tadiello.



decision is not official and it is the Italians who have flouted the rules in attempting to force the decision in their favour. In response to Silvio Manfroi's letter IFMAR Vice-President Mike Reedy has this to say:

*"How can a protest be made in a prescribed time if the records are not made available as called for in the regulations? How can any so-called 'official results' for a IFMAR event be issued when the IFMAR officials are denied the rights to review the race records? IFMAR decisions determined by its elected or appointed officials must be indisputable. Your statement that Ted Longshaw once more acted on his own, is totally wrong. The IFMAR decision to declare David Lecat the 1983 World Champion was not a decision made alone by Ted Longshaw. When the original scoring records were acquired and presented to me as IFMAR Vice-President, I undertook a complete review without any prior discussion as to possible errors other than to check the scoring for the two parties involved. It was only after that I had satisfied myself that errors had been made and that David Lecat was the actual winner, that I notified Ted Longshaw of my conclusions and the conclusions of others. After receiving this notification, and only after, Ted Longshaw then issued the official 'IFMAR' statement listing David Lecat as the 1983 World Champion. I have received letters from persons and organisations around the world. Most of these are from EFRA countries. So far only two letters have been negative towards IFMAR's decision. They are the letter from you (Silvio Manfroi) and an earlier one from the Italian Federation. The majority I have received have been supportive of the IFMAR decision."*

At the moment this is the last word on the matter and hopefully it will remain so — it should be. I cannot see how the Italians can hope to support their claim of incorrect protest procedure if they flout the same regulations in issuing ultimatums to IFMAR. Particularly as they don't deny that David Lecat won the race.

The last word should be IFMAR's as it is the world governing body, any decisions made by it must be abided by.

IFMAR however themselves are not blameless as this situation should never have occurred in the first place. It should have been made clear to Mr. Rossi that he would be organising and running the event totally under the guidance and control of IFMAR and not vice-a-versa. Hopefully they will get it right for the next championships to be held in Japan in 1985.

Mike Reedy sums it all up . . .

*"I feel the majority of the people involved with IFMAR want the satisfaction of the actual winner being recognised as such. I also feel this arguing and accusation should stop. Any IFMAR decision should be accepted in a sportsman-like manner by all so that we may move towards the next World Championships as a workable and co-operative organisation."*